

New emphasis on teaching about Canada

Are Ontario elementary schools doing enough to help children learn about Ontario and Canada?

That's a question that will be asked increasingly throughout Ontario in the coming year, as school boards and educators continue to examine and assess their programs against the curriculum expectations outlined in *The Formative Years*, the new curriculum policy for the Primary and Junior Division released a year ago by the Ministry of Education.

For the first time in an elementary school curriculum policy issued by the Ministry, the area of *Canadian Studies* has been isolated and stressed. For some schools there may be a need to markedly alter programs in this area.

The previous curriculum guideline for social studies, last published in 1971, was very broad in its approach to Canadian Studies. In years 1 and 2, for example, the key areas were The Child and His Neighbourhood and The Child and His Community. Years 3

and 4 were to concentrate on Life In Canadian Communities and Life in Communities Abroad. In years 5 and 6 children were to be taught Area Studies of People in the Eastern and Western Hemispheres.

In comparison, the direction in *The Formative Years* is much more specific.

"The expectations in Canadian Studies are highlighted now," says Jim Doris, an education officer in The Ministry's Curriculum Development Branch. "There can be no doubt that the Ministry has

very definite aims in mind."

While Mr. Doris emphasizes that the new section on Canadian Studies is built upon the traditional approaches of earlier curriculum guidelines in social studies, it is equally clear that *The Formative Years* is considerably more precise, with very clearly-stated curriculum expectations.

The history and geography components are still there, but they are more specifically highlighted than before. In addition, for the first time it is

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Reporting policies, projects and activities of the Ministry of Education, Ontario

Research report published

Success can be predicted early

Four years of research in Windsor have shown that it is possible to accurately identify children who may experience difficulty in coping with kindergarten and subsequent years of school.

A new report just released by the Ministry of Education presents the findings of the research and concludes:

"The key findings of the analyses show that it is possible to identify, very early, children who are at risk in the education system, and that several performance scores and behavioural traits can provide a very good estimate of subsequent reading readiness evaluation."

The report, titled *The Windsor Early Identification Project*, was written by Ken O'Bryan of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, principal researcher on the project. The research was funded under contract by the Ministry.

In the report, the Windsor project is described as "a multi-disciplinary endeavour aimed at the early identification of children who may be, for any or a variety of reasons, likely to have difficulty in coping

with the beginning school experience."

The project also set out to identify children who were "extremely capable and who might need specially adapted programs to meet their exceptional abilities."

The identification procedures developed in Windsor, while not complex or difficult to carry out, are broader than those used in most earlier projects elsewhere. Most such attempts have centred on the development of tests to predict subsequent difficulties in school subjects, mainly reading and mathematics.

In Windsor, however, it was recognized that many factors can be involved in creating a learning difficulty, and that for this reason no individual test is likely to be a reliable indicator.

"In effect," wrote Dr. O'Bryan in his report, "the days of the single, specific test designed to identify the child who won't be a reader in grade 3 are clearly numbered."

Registration for the Windsor program begins in the spring, some months before entrance to kindergarten. The parent

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Major studies analyze transition from secondary school to post-secondary

This month (May) in about 75 randomly-selected secondary schools across Ontario, students in grades 12 and 13 will be writing common achievement tests in key subjects. All students in both grades will write a test in their first language (English or French), as well as mathematics if it is in their timetable this year.

In addition, grade 13 students taking a second language (English or French) and physics will write standardized tests in these subjects.

The tests are part of a highly-significant and large-scale research project jointly commissioned by the Ministries of Education and Colleges and Universities.

Douglas Penny, chairman of the Education Ministry's co-ordinating group connected to the study, says the research is the largest and possibly the most significant project of its type ever commissioned in Ontario.

"The scope is very broad," he says, "but there are very specific questions that need to be answered. We are reviewing all of the educational policies of the two Ministries that con-

cern the preparation of students for post-secondary education, as well as their admission and reception into college and university programs.

"Recently we have been hearing a great deal of comment as to how well our secondary school graduates are actually prepared for post-secondary education and how well our colleges and universities have been adapting to the capabilities of their incoming students.

"It was decided to take an honest look, to see to what extent the criticism that we

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stated that studies in these areas should include coverage of Ontario, in addition to "the community" and Canada as a nation.

There is also a requirement that pupils "develop an awareness of law and government, and of the rights and duties of Canadian citizens."

Two additional aims are tied to the government's multiculturalism policy. In effect, they say that every child should become knowledgeable of his or her own cultural origin, and at the same time begin to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of other ethnic and cultural groups.

"The objective," says Mr. Doris, "is to help children become comfortable with cultural diversity, and to see other people as individuals as well as members of a particular group."

For some schools and teachers, adherence to the new requirements under the *Canadian Studies* heading may require a different approach in the classroom, with more emphasis given to studies about Canada and Canadians.

Much of the curriculum development work in Canadian Studies is in the hands of local curriculum committees, in keeping with the basic curri-

culum approach of the Ministry of Education.

Typically, a board's history co-ordinator will be working with a local committee to assess present programs, and to measure them against the goals stated in *The Formative Years*.

Individual school principals can do the same, with the teachers in their schools.

To supplement this work at the local level, the Ministry of Education will also provide practical "curriculum tips" to schools later this year.

"Many schools will find that their present classroom programs are very close to meeting the objectives stated in *The Formative Years*," says Mr. Doris. "Others may see that some changes are needed."

"Today in 1976, we just can't afford to have children moving on to year 7 without at least a basic knowledge of what Canada is all about, and what it means to be a Canadian."

"Through television, children are better informed about more issues, at least in a general sense, than their counterparts of 15 or 20 years ago or more—although you could say at the same time that the American domination of television is just another reason why an emphasis on Canadian

WHAT "THE FORMATIVE YEARS" SAYS ABOUT CANADIAN STUDIES IN THE PRIMARY AND JUNIOR DIVISIONS

The child in the Primary and Junior Divisions will be given opportunities to acquire a reasoned knowledge of and pride in Canada:

- become familiar with the geography and culture of the community, the province, and the country;
- develop an awareness of law and government, and of the rights and duties of Canadian citizens.
- become familiar with the historical development of the community and, at appropriate levels, of the province and the country;
- develop and retain a personal identity by becoming acquainted with the historical roots of the community and culture of his or her origin and by developing a sense of continuity with the past.
- begin to understand and appreciate the points of view of ethnic and cultural groups other than his or her own.

Studies is today more important than ever.

"It's not a case of being nationalistic in an isolated sense at all. But it seems to me that we owe it to all pupils to try to help them acquire a real understanding of Canada in the broad sense."

Meanwhile, basic questions remain for all educators:

- Is the national anthem played each morning in school?
- Is the Canadian flag prominently displayed in school?
- What do pupils *really* know about Canada's history or Canadian heroes by the time

they have completed six years of elementary school?

• Are schools doing what they should in trying to help children "acquire a reasoned knowledge of and pride in Canada" (as stated in *The Formative Years*)?

In many Ontario schools, maybe most, the answers to these and similar questions will be entirely satisfying. In some, they may not.

Either way, Jim Doris offers a very basic truth:

"It's really very easy to get young children interested in Canada," he says.

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Jim Doris: "We just can't afford to have children moving on to Year 7 without at least a basic knowledge of what Canada is all about, and what it means to be a Canadian."

New booklet warns against stereotyping future roles of women and men

Just off the press is *Changing Roles in a Changing World*, a Ministry of Education booklet focusing on the female student. It challenges all educators to come to terms with the fundamental social changes that emerge as sex-role stereotyping is diminished.

Sheila Roy, an education officer in the Ministry's Curriculum Development Branch, was instrumental in guiding the preparation of this document.

"Teachers should aim to prepare young women and young men for a future lifestyle and social structure quite different from the attitudes of our recent past," she said. "There is no use trying to preserve the attitudes of the mid-twentieth century; the adults of the 21st century won't need them."

In every facet of life, today's young woman is feeling the pressure for change and is recognizing unfulfilled needs, she said. Sensitive persons of all ages are beginning to see the limitations of the traditional value system and the inadequacies resulting from its stereotyped sex roles.

"Recent research indicates that the majority of girls who are in school today expect to be married a few years after leaving school, settle down, raise a family. Their plans for the future place a low priority on job training because they anticipate that the time between school and marriage will be brief.

But this attitude is a sad and cruel deception, says Sheila Roy. Changing social realities do not support the expectations of many of these young women and they may be ill-prepared to deal with the realities of the future unless they get help.

"It is anticipated that eight out of ten women presently in school will work outside the home for 25 to 30 years," the new publication says. "In Ontario, half a million working women are widowed, divorced, separated or single, and support themselves and their families.

"More than 40 per cent of all married women in Ontario work outside of the home, 75 per cent of them full-time. The average married woman leaves the work force for no more



Sheila Roy: "Teachers should aim to prepare young women and young men for a future lifestyle and social structure quite different from the attitudes of our recent past."

than 10 to 15 years for child rearing and then returns to work. Unfortunately, most women who re-enter the labor market are unprepared vocationally or psychologically to compete for jobs.

Today's teachers and counsellors should weigh these statistics carefully, notes Sheila Roy. Educators have the responsibility for helping to shape the self-image and expectations of young women. The task is compounded by the fact that most young women do not anticipate the problems they will face, so they do not ask for help.

"It is not enough to respond to expressed needs from students," the booklet says. "It is necessary for administrators, teachers and counsellors not only to be sensitive to the unfelt needs such as those inherent in the discrepancy between the expectations of young women and the social reality, but also to intervene by raising questions and exploring students' perceptions of social roles. . . . Educators will need to assess their own personal attitudes and values in the light

of changing conditions. Educators must look at themselves and their school community and be sensitive to stereotyped attitudes and beliefs."

Sheila Roy stresses that the document is of equal importance to young men, who stand to gain "liberation" from the constraints of outdated sex roles. There will be a broader horizon, a wider base of activities that are accepted and respected for boys. It will become an advantage to have qualities other than toughness and strength.

"Boys will be encouraged to reveal tenderness, vulnerability and sensitivity," the booklet says. "Boys will have to accept the fact there will probably be more competition from girls. They will be faced with some academic and athletic situations in which they will not

be automatically 'better than' the girls. Hopefully, the we/they barriers can be reduced and the boys will feel less pressure to prove themselves in stereotyped ways."

The booklet presents teachers with a detailed list of questions designed to identify and correct stereotyped roles. You can judge your own degree of "liberation" by answering yes or no to the following questions:

- Do you expect girls to do better in some subjects and boys to do better in others?
 - When a helper is needed in the classroom, do you assign jobs according to sex?
 - Do you discipline boys and girls differently in your classroom?
 - Have you developed teaching strategies to help your pupils deal with the changing roles of men and women?
 - Have you and your pupils reviewed textbooks and other learning materials for sex-role stereotyped content?
 - Do you work with other educators to develop materials devoid of sex-role stereotyping?
 - Are the contributions of women to the arts, literature, science and history clearly recognized in the courses taught in your school?
 - Do girls and boys share equally in the sports facilities, programs and available funds in your school?
 - Are there any courses in your school that are recommended to pupils on the basis of sex?
 - When a pupil is counselled, are all educational and vocational opportunities explored regardless of the sex of the pupil?
 - Does the occupational information in your school portray jobs without gender?
- The concluding section of the booklet contains a challenge to teachers:
- "You may choose to help bridge the gap between school and the outside world, or you may choose to widen it. There is no other choice."

A copy of *Changing Roles in a Changing World* is being sent to every teacher in Ontario, as well as to principals and supervisory officers. Bulk shipments are en route to schools and distribution should be complete in June. Extra copies can be obtained by writing to Sheila Roy, Curriculum Development Branch, Ministry of Education, 16th floor, Mowat Block, Queen's Park, Toronto, M7A 1L2.

"Confrontation is loser's game:" Wells

Confrontation-style leadership and the politics of militancy aren't all they are cracked up to be, when measured against what they actually achieve.

That was the clear message of Education Minister Thomas Wells when he addressed the February conference of the Ontario Secondary School Headmasters' Council at London.

Said Mr. Wells:

"Confrontation, with all its implied and actual overtones of hostility and defiance, is a

loser's game."

"Sometimes it achieves short term gains," he said, "but that is merely part of its allure, because confrontation in the long run is overwhelmingly destructive, and ultimately ineffective."

During the past year, the Minister reminded the principals, "we have seen in Ontario some classic examples of the futility and destructiveness, not to say ineffectiveness, of confrontation."

Over the past few years, he

said, some people have been led to believe that militant challenge of authority is the way to succeed. The more militant, the more successful the endeavour. Harassment is the way to browbeat the opponent into submission.

But, said Mr. Wells, confrontation is for losers.

"We had better recognize it for what it is, because if we don't, we are going to tear our school system apart."

Confrontation, he said, is "an enticing exercise. For many people who have been lured to it, it is a new game—full of intrigue, and with overtones of group power and manipulation which some people seem to relish."

In what one Toronto education columnist called the best speech of Mr. Wells' career, the Minister appealed to the secondary school principals in a broader philosophic vein as well.

Dismissing confrontation as futile and ineffective in a practical sense, he also underlined its potentially disastrous effects on society generally.

"In a democracy," he said, "a person's individual rights are sacred. People also have rights both as individuals and as members of collective groups, be they religious, ethnic, vocational or whatever.

"However, there is surely a point beyond which a group's perceived rights run counter to the broader concept of public rights.

"All of us surely know that our present system of democracy leaves a great deal of room for dissent, as it should. But it takes no great scholar to realize that dissent taken too far in its worst sense can ultimately lead to a breakdown of a society.

"If our democratic system as we have known it is to continue to function in a healthy state, there must be demonstrated a continuing and strong respect for authority and a basic underlying allegiance to order.

"And this relates to our school system.

"Respect for authority is learned behaviour. And for those who find themselves in positions of authority, at whatever level, whether in government or in a school or in any other entity, there is a responsibility to *earn* that respect,

insofar as it is possible for mortals to do so.

"Respect for authority is not necessarily a natural phenomenon, nor is it always a joyous, satisfying experience. Yet it is essential for the maintenance of order, and for the maintenance of freedom for the individual, and for the preservation of our way of life.

"We in our society cannot forget that it is authority—adherence to a set of rules which we design in a democratic way—that creates real freedom. Freedom is not ad hoc dissidence. Freedom is the right to express our views without fear of recrimination. Freedom is the right to choose the disciplines that govern us, and that is what authority is all about."

"I am not talking about blind obedience," he said, "which I take to mean an unthinking yielding to the control or command of others, because our free society could not have been achieved in this way, nor can it be maintained in this way.

"I am talking about the fundamentals in maintaining a healthy relationship with, and an understanding of, the existing institutions in our society. I am talking about maintaining a realization that the democratic process of refinement of progressive change is much to be preferred over the destructive thrust of confrontation and the vested-interest politics of intimidation, at whatever level they are practised."

Mr. Wells stressed that principals have a leadership role that involves authority, both within their schools and, more broadly, in the overall direction and effectiveness of the education system generally.

Without referring to any specific groups, the Minister described as a "crisis" in education "the gap between differing views of leadership and the way it should operate."

He said that if the crisis is not solved, the institution of public education as we know it could be altered drastically.

"I am concerned that all of us could find ourselves on a slippery downhill slope, unless some level heads of reason can see through the shallowness and futility of confrontation-style leadership," altering the course to a more balanced co-operative kind of leadership.



Thomas Wells: "Confrontation, with all its implied and actual overtones of hostility and defiance, is a loser's game. Confrontation in the long run is overwhelmingly destructive and ultimately ineffective."

More and better French-language learning materials expected next year

French-language educators in Ontario expect a significant increase in the number and quality of learning materials in French, as a direct outcome of the province's Learning Materials Development Plan.

Started last year, the plan is designed to encourage the development and production of needed Canadian learning materials, in both English and French, including textbooks and other instructional and learning aids.

Applications for funding under the plan are assessed by an independent advisory committee with a wide range of experience in both education and publishing. Seven French-speaking members of the committee form a sub-committee to consider French-language proposals.

In 1975, the initial year of the plan, \$250,000 of the total \$750,000 budget was labelled specifically for French-language materials (\$500,000

was allocated for English-language materials).

To supplement the \$250,000, another \$225,000 was provided by the federal Department of the Secretary of State, under the aegis of the Bilingualism in Education program of the Language Programmes Branch.

Under Ontario's Learning Materials Development Plan, proposals for new learning materials (including translations) may be submitted by three groups:

- publishers and producers of learning materials
- non-profit organizations including teacher associations, school boards and teacher education institutions.
- individuals, or groups of individuals operating independently of an organization.

Last year 135 proposals were received for French-language materials, mostly from publishers. Twenty-eight projects were approved, mainly for textbooks but also for other materials as well.

Work on the 28 projects is under way now, under contracts ranging from 12 to 16 months starting last January. Completed materials should begin to emerge late next year.

Despite the rapid increase in the number of French-language schools in many areas of the province since the mid-1960's, French-language learning materials have been in short supply. Three years ago, a survey by the Curriculum Development Branch of the Ministry of Education confirmed a serious shortage in most subject areas.

Texts from Quebec and others adapted from France by Canadian co-authors have been used widely. Since 1972 the number of approved French-language textbooks listed in Circular 14 has increased from about 100 to 425 this year, covering all grades.

With the Learning Materials Development Plan now into its second year, and with the same funding arrangements as last year, proposals for additional projects have been flowing in this spring.

Friday, May 14 was the cut-off date, and early indications were that the number of submissions would far exceed the response in the initial year.

A detailed brochure is available from the Learning Materials Development Plan, Curriculum Development Branch, Ministry of Education, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario.

Pupils experience "culture shock"

Hundreds of Ontario pupils are experiencing a kind of "culture shock" through their participation in *Project Canada*, the classroom twinning program sponsored by the Ministry of Education.

"Many of our pupils are very surprised to learn the realities of life in other parts of Canada, especially some of the more remote areas," says George Mason, co-ordinator of the program.

"It's really a form of culture shock for them, when they hear about the multicultural makeup of the country, the economic hardships endured in some areas, or the challenges involved in coping with extreme climates and isolation.

"Differences in history, geography, ethnic background and other variations between regions take on a new meaning for pupils, and make classroom work a fun thing," he says.

A class that becomes involved in *Project Canada* initially exchanges correspondence with another classroom in another part of the country. This develops one-to-one relationships between pupils, and friendships are born.

Later follow-up often includes an exchange of class projects, in the form of scrapbooks, tape recordings, videotapes, student-made films, and photographs.

"This kind of project is a learning experience at both ends," says Mr. Mason. "When researching material for class projects, our Ontario pupils often learn a great deal about themselves and their own communities, and the youngsters on the receiving end do too."

Organized and operated by the Ontario Ministry, *Project Canada* has the co-operation of all other provinces and territories. The respective departments of education handle distribution of application forms and brochures to schools, to facilitate twinning arrangements.

Now in its fifth year, *Project Canada* continues to attract new teachers every year.

Conference planned

Women's Studies

The Ministry of Education and the Toronto Board of Education are co-sponsoring a three-day Women's Studies Conference at Queen's Park, October 21 to 23.

More than 500 educators from across the province are expected to attend the working conference to help prepare units of women's studies for use within existing curriculum guidelines of the Ministry.

Sheila Roy, co-ordinator of the Ministry's participation in the conference, said the immediate objectives will be to produce materials useful to classroom teachers in integrating the changing roles of men and women into all aspects of the curriculum.

In the long term, the conference aims at raising awareness of the limitations imposed by sex-role stereotypes and at balancing the curriculum by providing a wide variety of role models for both male and female students.

Educators interested in participating should write to Ms. Roy in the Curriculum Development Branch, Ministry of Education, Mowat Block, Queen's Park, Toronto.

Tips for teachers on promoting citizenship

"A good citizen is a person who does not live for himself or herself alone."

That's the motto of a booklet sent to all schools in the province to highlight the 1975 recipients of the Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship.

Five women and seven men were selected from 300 nominated for the honour. The medals were presented by Lieutenant-Governor Pauline McGibbon at a ceremony at Queen's Park.

The Ministry of Education decided to publish photographs and biographies of the recipients in a booklet designed for use in the junior and intermediate curriculum.

The Ontario Medal award was instituted in 1973 to recognize outstanding contributions by individuals to society. The 1975 recipients include two Indian band chiefs, a Hamilton physician, two workers in mental retardation,

the operator of a halfway house for prisoners, several teachers and social workers.

Accompanying the booklet is a sheet of suggestions for possible classroom use.

Among the suggestions for classroom use are the following:

- Stories related to the theme of good citizenship might be read and the qualities discovered could be compared with those of the 1975 winners of the Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship.

- After reading the booklet, students might reach consensus on the criteria for good citizenship and apply the criteria to other potential winners.

- Students could nominate someone they know for the medal, give reasons for their choice and prepare the citation.

- Posters depicting the qualities of good citizenship might be designed and constructed.

More university students to help with second-language teaching

The unique *Second Language Monitor Program*, by which university students are paid to help with second-language teaching in schools, will be expanded this fall.

The program is run by the Council of Ministers of Education, funded by the federal Department of the Secretary of State, and administered in Ontario by the Ministry of Education. It will include 500 university students next September, an increase of 100 over the present year.

Under the program, full-time university students work 6-8 hours per week as second-language "monitors" under the direction of regular second-language teachers in the schools. They are paid \$3,000 for the work.

"In most schools the monitors have a very real motivational effect on the students," says Roy Schatz, who co-ordinates the program in the Ministry's Educational Exchange and Special Projects Branch.

"The monitors concentrate on the oral aspects of learning a second language, and they typically work with small groups of students. Perhaps because the university students are themselves young, the school students can relate to

them very easily, and language becomes much more of a living organism for them."

Of the 500 university students involved in the program across Canada next year, about 200 will be in Ontario schools. Of these, about 180 will be francophones, mostly from Quebec, who will enrol for the year in English-language Ontario universities and work as "monitors" in nearby English-language schools.

The remaining 20 will be anglophones who will take full-time studies at French-language universities in Ottawa and Sudbury, and work as "monitors" in French-language schools in those cities.

Most of the 200 monitors in Ontario will work at the secondary school level, although several dozen will be in elementary schools in both immersion and non-immersion programs.

Duties of the monitors are described in a bilingual booklet which describes details of the program:

"A monitor's duties will mainly involve helping the teacher to provide students with a good basis in the aural-oral aspects of the language, particularly conversation and pronunciation, by means of supplementary non-teaching

activities. These activities will always be conducted under the supervision of a second-language teacher."

For teachers, the assignment of a monitor can mean extra work—"but almost to a person," says Mr. Schatz, "teachers say it's worth it because the university students really do motivate the kids."

For the monitors themselves the year is demanding, since they must be enrolled in full-time university or college programs. Some, however, are able to reduce their course load by one subject, to give them adequate time to carry out their responsibilities at the school.

The program is popular among both teachers and university students. Last year there were 500 applicants from Ontario alone; each one is interviewed individually.

In September two five-hour training sessions are held (in Toronto and Ottawa) for the monitors, along with the teachers with whom they will be working.

The 1976-77 term will mark the fourth year of the program.

Information is available from the Educational Exchange and Special Projects Branch, Ministry of Education, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ont. M7A 1L2.

Jargon of community schools

In the early stages of writing the original manuscript for the Ministry's new handbook about community schools, author Margaret Gayfer found it challenging to cut through the jargon that has grown up around the community school concept.

She writes:

Some principals, trustees and parents have the idea that the community school is a nebulous and complex idea, too far-fetched and ambitious for ordinary folk who like to work with tangible realities.

And, indeed, it is easy enough to see how people can get this idea when one considers some of the pseudo-academic literature that has been produced on the subject.

For example, one can find the community school described as:

- "a catalytic cohesive nexus."
- "a learning laboratory of human behaviour."
- "the facilitator of the mobilization of resources."
- "a pulsating multi-dimensional human space."

Such metaphors, smacking of officialism, methods and systems, mercifully fade before the reality of the community school: a neighbourly centre where people go freely, for whatever reason, without the restrictions of routine or regimentation.

The true community school does not revolve around formal meetings and tightly organized programs. What it offers is a *relationship* that people feel is rewarding and stimulating and enjoyable.



New horizons opening

Exchange opportunities for teachers

About 75 Ontario teachers will be teaching for a year in Britain, United States, France or Australia beginning next September, as part of reciprocal exchange programs with the four countries.

In addition there will be several exchanges with the province of Quebec.

About 40 of the exchanges will be with British teachers, under a program that has operated for many years. The program with France is new, and will involve 12 exchanges in the initial year. About 25 exchanges will be arranged with Australia, as four more states in that country have been added to the program.

Involvement of the Ministry of Education includes the arrangements for the exchanges, and provision of travel assistance to help with air fares.

While on exchange, teachers are paid by their home school

boards. The same is true for the teachers who come here from other countries and provinces. All the exchanges are for one year.

Canada recently signed a cultural exchange agreement with Belgium, and this may include teacher exchange beginning in 1977. Another

recent agreement with the state of Baden-Wurtemberg in West Germany should also lead to teacher exchanges for 1977.

Information on exchange programs is available from the Educational Exchange and Special Projects Branch, Ministry of Education, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario.

Correspondence courses available to school boards

For the first time in its 50-year history, the Correspondence Courses Services of the Ministry of Education will make its course materials available to Ontario school boards.

Upon request from a Director of Education, a board will be given a sample set of lesson materials for years three, four and five of the secondary school program. A total of 42 courses will be available.

Joe Rees, head of the correspondence section, said that it is hoped the course materials will be of assistance to those involved in planning the curriculum in the secondary schools.

The materials should also be of use to those investigating the expanded use of independent study, and to students and others who may be interested in taking courses by correspondence.

New handbook will relate interesting real-life case studies on "community school" projects

"The community school has created a friendly atmosphere in the community," says the proud principal. "People feel that they belong somewhere and with others, and that the school can answer their needs."

"There's a changing attitude in the school itself—the feeling that we are a family—because teachers are now talking together with parents."

This Ontario principal is one of many quoted in a new publication now in the final editing stage at the Ministry of Education. The booklet will relate a wide variety of "case studies" of schools throughout the Province that have become true community schools, involving parents and others in a variety of ways.

The publication, written in an easy-to-read style instead of stuffy officialese, covers a wide range of topics, including:

- simple tips on how one school made a volunteer program work.
- why an elementary school principal takes regular coffee breaks with groups of parents in their homes.
- how two school boards in the same county entered into a "reciprocal use agreement" with the parks and recreation authorities of the county's seven municipalities.
- why one principal believes that "the best community involvement tool in the school is the telephone."
- how the staff of an inner-city school serving an ethnic area manages to maintain a close personal rapport with parents.
- how residents of an upper-middle-class suburban community organized an extremely active Community School Association using the neighbourhood school as its physical focal point.
- the personal story of "the life and times of a community school co-ordinator."
- why one major school board, recognizing that community support and involvement is essential, decided to designate a school as a "community school" only when residents present a proposal to the board to this effect.
- what happens when men on shift work come into the school two afternoons a week to play a "big brother" role with the grade 5 boys, some of whom come from single-parent



Pierre Lafontaine (left), principal of St. Joseph School in Port Colborne, knows the real meaning of the term "community school." Two years ago he helped form Le Comité Culturel du Club Français, a community association designed to help the school and the community relate to each other, and to provide a link for all French cultural interests in the Niagara Peninsula area. Mr. Lafontaine has been instrumental in building enthusiasm for a wide program of community activities that bring citizens into the school.

homes.

These and other case-study stories to be included in the new publication are aimed mainly at school principals, to try to convey the real meaning of the term "community school."

The object is to show the great advantages of having parents and other citizens involved in some way with the school, and what happens when a community really identifies with the school in a personal way.

Some principals and teachers still shudder at the thought of parents coming into the school regularly. But those who have deliberately sought parental involvement are usually enthusiastic.

"I love this, having people feel free to come into the school at any time," said one principal. "And it also helps the staff get to know people of the community."

Another observed:

"There's more goodwill and help in the community than any principal realizes. All you've got to do is ask. Just pick up the phone. People are more willing to come in when you ask them to contribute

their skills."

One principal of a 700-pupil elementary school who is a strong believer in parental involvement offers this practical advice about volunteer programs:

"We don't invite parents to be volunteers unless there is a specific job in which they can feel useful and needed. Volunteerism shouldn't be allowed to become an empty public relations gesture. We want parents who are interested in children, not just their own, and in the ongoing work of the school."

The same principal gets right down to earth about classroom visits by parents. He says:

"At our school, parents are welcome to sit in on a class to see what's going on, especially if there is a problem with their child. Our first response is to talk over a problem with the parents. If the teacher agrees, the parent can sit in on the class and see how the program is run. The principal has a responsibility to help teachers handle problems and to help parents feel that the school is really trying to resolve them."

The new handbook, containing these and dozens of

other tidbits of unpretentious comment on community schools, was written mainly by Margaret Gayfer, former editor of the magazine *School Progress* and a periodic contributor to major Canadian publications.

Over a period of several months, Miss Gayfer talked to many dozens of parents, teachers, principals, trustees, students and administrators, trying to sift through the inevitable jargon that has sprung up related to community schools (see box).

Her assignment was to report, in simple human terms, what was going on in the schools she visited where school and community had developed a special relationship.

Although the publication has yet to be finalized, the early manuscript shows that she has written what may become an educational best-seller.

Publication date for the handbook is not yet fixed, but it is expected to be on the presses this spring. It will be given wide distribution to all schools, school boards and community groups.

Windsor project on how to predict pupil progress

Continued from page 1

and child visit the school together. With the parent's help, the school secretary completes a special form which requests basic information for school records as well as supplementary health data.

Meanwhile, the child is able to experience the classroom setting and activities — the second purpose of the spring visit.

In September, parent and child return to the school. The child's teacher records more information about the child, including health and emotional history, and any medication being taken by the child. There is also discussion of any unusual fears or special needs the child might have.

When the parent-teacher interview is completed, the teacher turns to a kit specially designed for the Windsor project whose contents are inexpensive and easily available. Purpose of the kit is to test the child's competence in basic skills.

Typical of the items included in the kit are plastic

cutlery, colour cards, lengths of wooden dowel, coloured blocks and a teddy bear.

Later, during the first weeks of school, the teacher completes a behavioural assessment of each child in the class. Anecdotal records are compiled and made available to parents and to future teachers to assist in the full understanding of the pupil.

Speech testing takes place early in the year. The children are also tested for hearing defects and possible vision difficulties.

Children identified by these and other procedures as likely to experience difficulties are termed "at-risk" (because the problem may not yet be an educational one). Follow-up with each "at-risk" pupil begins, including further assessment by the teacher, a visit by a primary consultant, and often supplementary tests.

The results of the Windsor procedures are "very promising indeed," says Dr. O'Bryan. "For the most part they indicate a high degree of reliability

of assessment and a very satisfactory potential for prediction of children who may experience difficulty in coping with the first and subsequent years of school."

Do the procedures developed in Windsor have application for other school boards? Dr. O'Bryan makes his answer very clear in his report:

"There is ample evidence that the Windsor Early Identification Project works well for teachers, parents and children in terms of ease of administration, value as structured interview opportunities, and in the generation of good feelings between all concerned.

"Few criticisms have been made by anyone directly concerned in the project.

"The high degree of use of the results by teachers, together with growing demand for wider applications, offers support for the belief that it possesses a high degree of practical value for education."

Because of the success of the Windsor procedures in identifying both high-risk and high-performance children, efforts are now being made to encourage other school boards to utilize the same or similar approaches. An informative slide presentation (with voice-over) is already available, and this will soon be superseded by a film about the Windsor project. Both are intended for use in workshops with teachers and parents.

One of the key figures in the success of the Windsor project was Dr. Percy Vivian, a Special Consultant attached to the Special Education Branch of the Ministry of Education.

"Percy Vivian played an immense part," says Dr. O'Bryan. "He is the man whose tireless energy over four years motivated people to perform as well as they did."

Keith Clarke, Director of the Ministry's Special Education Branch, says that the early identification of children with potential learning difficulties is to be given "very high priority."

"There are very minor cost implications," he says. "We are anxious to work with school boards in conducting workshops or meetings where the Windsor project can be explained and interpreted."

Meanwhile, copies of Dr. O'Bryan's report, which explains the Windsor project in detail, are being provided to all school boards.

Additional copies are available at \$2.50 from OISE Publication Sales, 252 Bloor St. W., Toronto, Ont., M5S 1V6.

Summer courses going strong

This summer about 7,000 Ontario teachers will take professional courses in 17 cities across the province, sponsored by the Ministry of Education.

More than 40 courses and seminars are being offered in a wide variety of communities, settings and subject areas.

If you are reading this before June 1, there is still time to select a course and to combine a pleasant vacation with professional upgrading.

Every school in Ontario has received a copy of the 1976 course calendar entitled *Professional Summer Programs for Teachers*. Look for its bright orange-and-green cover.

There are seminars of one, two and three weeks in subjects such as art, law, music, attendance counselling, community school work and language methodology.

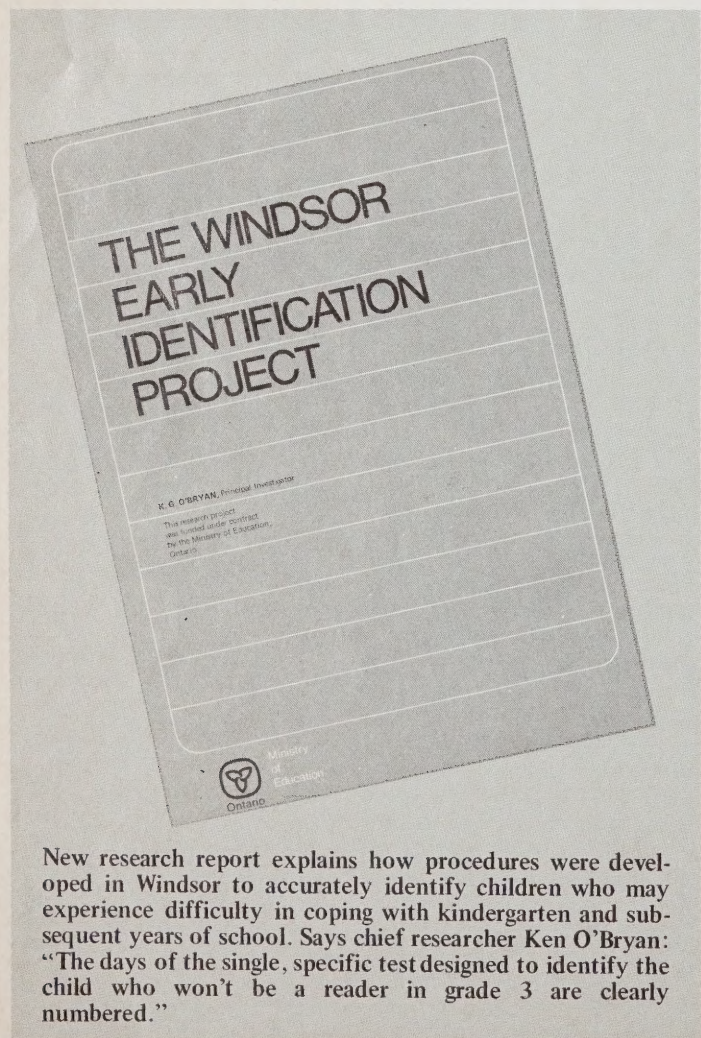
Four and five week courses are offered in many other subjects.

For instance, a teacher of vocal or general music can take advantage of a one-week seminar at Geneva Park, a perfect vacation setting on Lake Couchiching. Total cost, including accommodation, meals and tuition is \$85 — surely one of the best travel buys in Ontario for a one-week package!

Teachers involved in driver education programs might want to take a three-week course in Kingston. In addition to the holiday possibilities of the Kingston area, the course provides 40 solid hours of actual driving instruction methodology and 50 hours of lectures on traffic regulations and car safety.

Special Education is a popular study area that will be pursued in four-week courses at Barrie, Kitchener, North Bay (in French and English), Ottawa, St. Catharines and Toronto.

Application forms have been sent to schools along with the course calendar. Additional forms may be obtained from the Information Systems and Records Branch, Ministry of Education, 18th floor, Mowat Block, Queen's Park, Toronto, M7A 1L2.



New research report explains how procedures were developed in Windsor to accurately identify children who may experience difficulty in coping with kindergarten and subsequent years of school. Says chief researcher Ken O'Bryan: "The days of the single, specific test designed to identify the child who won't be a reader in grade 3 are clearly numbered."

"You are considered to be the managers of your schools"

Secondary school principal's role: "Uncomfortable"

At conferences of Ontario secondary school principals over the past year or two, a frequent topic of discussion—both public and private—is the principals' relationship with the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, and their responsibilities for leadership within their schools and within the education system in general.

The February conference of the Ontario Secondary School Headmasters' Council at London was no exception, and Education Minister Thomas Wells used the occasion to comment on the issue in broad terms.

There is an "apparent dilemma," he said, "which many of you face in determining the parameters of your leadership role in your schools.

"I know that at your recent conferences, including this one, there has been a great deal of discussion about this, as if you were at some kind of crossroads.

"Well, maybe you are. But in any case, I think that the time is rapidly approaching when you are going to have to jump down off the fence."

The jump, however, should not be made before serious reflection, said the Minister.

"I think that you should reflect very seriously on how the public, your employers and mine, view the situation. In your schools, you are viewed by the public as the supreme authority—the boss, the manager, or whatever term you care to use."

"All of the peripheral arguments aside," Mr. Wells said, "there is no question that you are considered to be the managers of your schools. Of course you are the principal teacher, but your role most definitely includes the management function.

"I think the public believes that your job is boss of the school, boss of the teachers, and boss of the students. The

public knows that you are paid more than an ordinary teacher.

"I use the word boss purposely, because it is a word that the public understands. The public doesn't want you to be just a teacher. I think that they want and expect you to be also a manager.

"The term 'principal teacher', however accurately it may reflect your leadership style in your own school, cannot be used any longer as a crutch by those who seem to want it

both ways."

The Minister reminded principals that they are in "a very special and difficult position.

"I know that it's an uncomfortable position at times. It certainly is anomalous in some respects.

"But you have been placed there in the confidence that you have the power of character and intellect that enables you to exemplify the kind of leadership that I have described."



Seminar considers ways to teach about native people using Ministry publications

Oniatariio, the Iroquois word for "beautiful lake," gave Ontario its name. If school children don't know it, they have plenty of adult company.

This comment typifies the concerns expressed recently at a Ministry-sponsored gathering of educators at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto.

About 40 teachers and curriculum planners considered ways of infusing the curriculum with true appreciation of the history and culture of native people by using two Ministry publications, the *People of Native Ancestry Resource Guide* and *Resource List*.

"What we have to do is spread the word that these documents can be helpful in all classrooms, not only in reserve schools," said Keith Telfer, an education officer of the Ministry's Central Ontario Regional Office which sponsored the conference.

"Let's face it," he said. "What we are fighting is the television image of the Indian, the distorted image that young students bring with them to school. It is hard to dispel,

because the average ten-year-old has spent more time watching television than going to school."

Sharon Spencer, a teacher at C.D. Farquharson Elementary School in Scarborough, described her methods of removing the prejudiced images from the minds of her students.

"By learning about the arts, crafts, survival skills and environmental adaptation of the Woodland Indians," she said, "the pupils learn about the Indians' moral strength and reverence for nature. I was delighted when one of my grade 3 pupils wrote that to be an Indian is not to waste anything."

Miss Spencer and three of her colleagues prepared a 60-page outline of two units of study on the Canadian Indian, one appropriate for grade 3 and the other for grade 7.

Some of the objectives in the outline:

- To make our children aware of the heritage and culture of the Indians of Canada;
- To make our children aware of the contributions made by Indians in the development of

Ministry-sponsored seminar was designed to show educators how to give young people a true understanding of the history and culture of Canada's native people. "Let's face it," said a Ministry spokesman. "What we are fighting is the television image of the Indian."

Canada;

- To integrate the study of the Indian into relevant parts of the social studies, languages, science, art, music and other pertinent areas of the curriculum.

- To help children realize that Indian culture and the dominant culture of the classroom are simply two of many Canadian and world cultures.

Miss Spencer acknowledged the help of Alton Bigwin, an Ojibwa Indian and former Scarborough principal now employed by the Ministry of Education, for his guidance in the preparation of her outline.

Mr. Bigwin, an education officer who was instrumental in originating the PONA documents, told the gathering that he is looking forward to the publication of PONA II—a resource guide for use in the intermediate and senior divisions.

With evident emotion, Mr.

Bigwin told the gathering how the PONA resource guide has spiritual significance for many Indians. One of its cover illustrations represents an Indian myth about the creation of the world, he said. As he spoke, his hands moved in intriguing gestures that evinced a visible response from the Indians at the centre.

Keith Lickers, an Iroquois Indian employed as an education officer in the Ministry's Curriculum Services Branch, told the gathering about his teaching experience at the Six Nations' Reserve near Brantford. The lack of suitable teaching materials made him resolve to correct the situation when he became a principal and later joined the Ministry.

The participants were treated to an Indian meal of barley corn soup and wild rice casserole prepared by the women's auxiliary of the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto.

Research on transition to post-secondary

Continued from page 1

have been hearing is justified, and to let the chips fall where they may.

"There is a great deal of *opinion* on how well students are prepared, and how well they are incorporated into post-secondary institutions. But at the same time there has been a notable absence of hard data. So we have commissioned this research to come up with as much hard and objective information as possible — and in doing so, we'll be looking at *everything* that affects the movement of students between secondary schools and colleges or universities."

Mr. Penny is quick to emphasize that the research is "definitely not an inquisition into the high schools by the university community."

"We're looking carefully at *both* levels, and the outcome could affect present practices in colleges and universities as much as those in secondary schools. The whole thrust of the research is to conduct a hard-nosed, objective evaluation by people who know the system but who are essentially outsiders."

How is it being done?

Three separate research studies are being conducted as part of the overall project. Two of them directly involve the 75 secondary schools selected at random:

- A research team at OISE headed by Dr. Ross Traub is examining the characteristics of students in the 75 schools who are now completing high school and are planning to enter college and university. It is this team that will, among other things, be measuring achievement in certain curriculum areas in the 75 secondary schools, through common testing.

- A second research team, based at Queen's University and led by Dr. Alan King, is analyzing courses in the two senior years at the 75 schools, as well as programs in the first two years at colleges and universities.

- The third study will look at the roles and responsibilities of high schools, colleges and universities as viewed by students, teachers and the public. It is being carried out by Stevenson and Kellogg Limited and its Canadian Facts subsidiary.

In addition to the three specific research studies, opinions and suggestions will be solicited broadly across Ontario. The education community, as well as organizations representing the general public, will be invited to submit briefs or other presentations.

All three research studies were awarded by tender and started in January. All are scheduled to be completed, with final reports, by mid-November. Now, almost at the half-way mark, all three are on schedule.

Early press reports about the far-reaching project were sketchy. Some called it a "literacy study," but the scope is vastly more broad than that. It is only when you talk with someone like Mr. Penny, who has a full overview, that you can appreciate the real importance of the project, and the possible implications for future educational direction in the province.

"Looking at the overall education scene, not just in Ontario but elsewhere as well, one of the major areas of tension and apparent disagreement is in the differing attitudes towards the proper roles and responsibilities of schools, colleges and universities," he says.

"Not an inquisition into high schools by universities"

"For example, at one extreme, a university professor may believe that every student in his freshman class should be at an equal starting point, with roughly the same level of knowledge in various pre-specified topics ... or put another way, he believes that secondary schools should be producing a relatively uniform product for him, so that his lectures can begin from a well-understood base.

"On the other side, in the secondary schools you may have teachers who realize that only a relatively small percentage of their students are university-bound, and who therefore want to adopt a very flexible approach in the classroom that will reach the *majority* of students, instead of concentrating mainly on the achievements of those who hope to attend college or university.

"Between these two ex-

trêmes there is obviously some half-way ground, and the study conducted by Stevenson and Kellogg is intended to discover exactly who thinks what, and to provide some objective guidance on the proper road ahead."

A second major "tension area" cited by Mr. Penny can be capsulized by the word *diversity* — diversity among students, and diversity among education programs provided at secondary and post-secondary levels for these students.

The diversity of students in the senior grades of secondary schools is challenge enough itself. Today, compared to a generation ago, a much larger proportion of the eligible age group is attending high school, and staying through the senior grades. The result is a much greater diversity among students, in terms of abilities, attitudes, socio-economic background, courses taken in earlier years, ethnic background, achievement levels, short-term and long-term goals, etc.

The OISE research team, with Ross Traub as the principal researcher, will look at these and other factors in an effort to assess the nature and degree of diversity among students in grades 12 and 13

pared with marks in school-based tests given through the school year. Researchers will also try to determine whether there are relationships between test marks and the number and kinds of courses the student has taken previously.

Meanwhile, Alan King and his Queen's research team are looking at the second aspect of diversity — trying to measure and assess differences between courses offered in the 75 secondary schools, and between courses offered in the first two years of college and university programs.

The plan is to take a representative sampling of courses offered at both levels, and to analyze factors like the objectives and content of the courses, teaching methods, levels of prior knowledge among students expected by teachers, methods used to evaluate student achievement, and so on.

Out of this study should come a clearer picture of what high schools, colleges and universities are actually doing, and hopefully an indication of whether there are overlaps or gaps in certain areas.

The diversity among both students and programs that exists today is probably one of the greatest strengths of the

who plan to go on to college or university. Their research will be conducted in the 75 randomly-selected high schools across the province.

Part of their studies will involve the common testing in mathematics, physics (as a representative science), and English and French as first and second languages. Complete anonymity of students, teachers and schools will be maintained, since the researchers are interested in collective results.

The tests were selected with the advice of practising educators from schools, colleges and universities. Although they cannot measure the full range of achievement in each subject, the tests will measure certain important components of each.

To be quite fair, each teacher whose students are being tested was asked whether each of the test items reflected an item that had been taught.

The test marks will be com-

education system. But at the same time, it is a factor that gives rise to misunderstandings and frustrations too.

For example when a university professor makes a blanket statement that his students can neither read nor write up to his expectations, you usually find that he is talking about the lower third of his students — students who would never have made it to university in the rigid "old days." On the other hand, most university teachers readily admit that the top third of their students are today as well as or even better prepared than ever.

Realities like this give rise to many basic philosophical questions about roles and practices of secondary schools, colleges and universities — and the overriding task of the three research projects will be to try to provide guidance and direction in achieving the solutions that will best serve students.

Seminars give educators the feel of metric

The scene is a meeting room in a Toronto hotel. Tables are filled with empty bottles, large and small beakers, tumblers, stemware, fine-calibre weigh scales, funnels, flasks, multi-colored cubes, bowls of sand and powders.

A group of people sporting *Think Metric* buttons move into the room, to the tables, and put their hands on the materials. They begin pouring, weighing, peering, sniffing, sorting, measuring, fingering, estimating, numbering.

Voices of quiet excitement are heard: "Two decilitres. Thirty micrograms. Eighty kilopascals."

A reporter, camera at the ready, goes about the room, looking for angles, moving aside audio-visual equipment, projectors for slides, films and overheads. He approaches a silver-haired gentleman in a tropical leisure suit. It is John Del Grande, co-ordinator of mathematics for the North York Board of Education, who beams a smile and nods a welcome.

"You've never been to one of these affairs before," he says. "Well, it's a great hands-on festival. You know, the manipulative materials that we give to kids to handle and measure, so they can have a physical experience of a mathematical problem. Today, it's the teachers' turn to practise the hands-on approach to learning. Some of the top people in the field from the Toronto area are in this room now. It's all for the sake of getting a handle on how to

implement the mathematics and metrication portion of *The Formative Years*."

To stop the visitor from nodding and scribbling, Mr. Del Grande hands him a glass filled with a colourless, odourless liquid. As it goes towards the nose, the educator explains: "It's only water. Just try to guess its volume."

The reporter has no heart to tell him that it looks like a little less than four ounces. That would be a mistake here. But he couldn't for the life of him remember the proper metric measurement. Was it cubic centimetres or centilitres? His throat is parched.

"Don't worry," chuckles Mr. Del Grande. "It's just a little more than a decilitre." The visitor gulps the contents of the glass.

"You should have been here yesterday and the day before (March 15 and 16)," continues the host. "We had some top brass from school boards and the Ministry. Sixteen school boards sent representatives."

"You should talk to Norm Gillespie from the Central Ontario Regional Office of the Ministry. He did a lot of the bull work to help me get this conference on the road. Go have a talk with him and he'll fill you in on what you missed."

Mr. Gillespie later confirmed that three action-packed days had "thoroughly celsified and metricated" more than 100 participants—teachers, co-ordinators and consultants.

Meanwhile, a few days earlier, a similar scene took

place in a hotel in Chatham. The Western Ontario Regional Office of the Ministry of Education is sponsoring a metrication seminar, an "SI blitz" for representatives of all 14 school boards of that region.

The hall is full—even though ice, wind and hail have lashed fury across the region for a week. Robert Stevenson of the Ministry's London office, chairman of the region's metric committee, speaks:

"When you go back to your classrooms or board offices, take with you the basic theme of our seminar—the process of converting to SI is a godsend for all of us who have been re-thinking the primary and junior mathematics program in terms of *The Formative Years*. Two birds with one stone.

Here's the opportunity many of us have been waiting for—to emphasize decimals rather than fractions, manipulative rather than descriptive geometry."

John Oppen, a curriculum officer in the London office, takes his turn at the podium and guides a final session of the seminar. He calls on participants to do some forcefield analysis, to list both the major drives and obstacles involved in implementation of SI.

The results are not surprising. The major obstacles identified as problems are teacher time and resources for metrication. One of the major drives is identified as the co-operative effort of teachers in all subject areas. SI has implications for all subjects and levels of the curriculum.

Young Travellers program enables thousands to visit Province's capital

The 39 Cree Indian pupils in grade 7 at Moose Factory Island Public School are still talking about their fabulous February adventure—a journey to their provincial capital.

Thanks to the Ontario Young Travellers program, the twelve and thirteen-year-olds, accompanied by four adults, set out on the 650-mile, rail-and-bus trip to Toronto.

In Moosonee, they boarded the Ontario Northland Railway's Polar Bear Express to Cochrane—an exciting trip on the legendary train they had so often heard about in their childhood.

On February 24, the day they arrived, the temperature rose to 10°C in Toronto, adding to their long list of surprises. The visitors were billeted at Queen Elizabeth Public School in Mississauga, but their busy schedule of sightseeing kept them on the move throughout Metro: the Royal Ontario Museum, Maple Leaf Gardens, the Ontario Science Centre, the Ontario Legislature and the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto.

Since their return to Moose Factory, they have spent many classroom hours writing, studying and talking about their experiences.

The Ministry of Education paid 90 per cent of their travel costs, and local funding took

care of most other expenses.

The Moose Factory adventure story is hardly unique: about 300 similar stories will unfold during 1976 as the Ontario Young Travellers program brings some 10,000 grade 7 and 8 students from Northern Ontario to Toronto.

Alan Milne, the Ministry official responsible for the program, says that it has expanded steadily since its inception in 1974. From then to the end of 1976, more than 27,000 pupils will have visited the provincial capital from Northern Ontario.

"We have received written reports from the schools that have participated," says Mr. Milne, "and some of the comments are revealing. One teacher noted that his students had never before seen row housing or skyscrapers. Many reports described a kind of 'culture shock' experienced by the pupils. Despite hours of classroom preparation before the trip, a certain degree of shock is inevitable during any visit to a strange destination."

Further information may be obtained by writing to The Co-ordinator, Ontario Young Travellers, Ministry of Education, Educational Exchange and Special Projects Branch, 19th floor, Mowat Block, Queen's Park, Toronto, M7A 1L2.



Metric seminar for educators: pouring, weighing, peering, sniffing, sorting, measuring, fingering, estimating, numbering . . . decilitres, micrograms, kilopascals . . . "a great hands-on festival."

Enrolment fluctuations at Teacher Education College are response to "marketplace factors"

Enrolments at the Toronto and Hamilton campuses of the Ontario Teacher Education College have been fluctuating significantly over the past five years, and the probability is that they will continue to move up and down in response to "marketplace" factors.

Five years ago, in 1971, enrolment at the Toronto and Hamilton teachers' colleges (now combined into OTEC) stood at almost 2,700. There was talk of a surplus of elementary school teachers in Ontario, and some people were calling for restrictions on the numbers accepted into teacher education.

"Restrictions on enrolments weren't the answer then," says Kel Crossley, "and they would be very difficult to enforce even if we found ourselves in a surplus situation again."

Mr. Crossley, Director of the Teacher Education and Certification Branch of the Ministry of Education, says that events of the past five years show how "the mechanism of the marketplace" tends to have a levelling effect on the balance between teacher supply and demand.

"In 1971 and 1972," he recalls, "there was much publicity about teacher surpluses. We said at the time that if there was an imbalance, it would quickly correct itself, and it did."

"From an enrolment at Toronto and Hamilton of 2,700 in 1971, the figure dropped dramatically to 1,700 in 1972, to 1,100 in 1973, and to 767 in 1974."

"Then last year it doubled to just over 1,500, and we're anticipating that about the same number will enrol in September of 1976."

There were several factors

that influenced the three-year enrolment decline starting in 1972, says Mr. Crossley.

"For one thing, the publicity about teacher surpluses had a big effect. People with only a marginal interest in teaching went elsewhere."

"Also, 1972 was the year in which we started phasing in the new higher entrance requirements for elementary teacher training, and this had a noticeable limiting effect on enrolments."

The objective of maintaining a reasonably close balance between the number of new teacher graduates needed each year and the number who are actually enrolled has never been easy to achieve. But recently the balance has been much better than it was in the 1950's and 1960's.

In the early 1970's, when the number of people wishing to enter elementary teacher education actually exceeded the number of jobs that would be available, the Province was able to increase the qualifications of elementary teachers, a long-standing objective which had never been achievable in the years of shortages. The Ontario Teachers' Federation was a strong and consistent supporter of this move.

The statistics involved in forecasting the number of new teachers required, even a year or two in advance, are imprecise and tricky. Mr. Crossley, whose Ministry Branch is responsible for OTEC, says, for example, that more than 10% of the Province's teachers withdraw from teaching in Ontario every year, for reasons of retirement, illness, marriage, to continue their education, etc.

"At the elementary level alone," he says, "the attrition rate is about 7,000 every



Kel Crossley: forecasting teacher supply and demand is an imprecise art.

year."

But while it is one thing to forecast the attrition rate with some degree of accuracy, based mainly on experience of previous years, it's another matter to determine how many new graduates will be needed from teacher education to fill the vacancies.

"There are many factors that influence the number of teaching positions available in any given year," says Mr. Crossley. "Last year, for example, I had thought that there might be a slight surplus of graduates from elementary school teacher education. But the government allocated the extra \$80-per-elementary-pupil

in funding, and many boards were anxious to at least hold the line on class size, with the result that a surplus didn't seem to develop at all."

There are other factors that make it difficult to be precise with statistics in forecasting teacher supply and demand. Says Mr. Crossley:

"It's impossible to measure with any accuracy the number of people who will be returning to teaching in any given year, after an absence. Also, we traditionally get a significant number of new teachers every year from outside the Province. Even a factor like the increased teacher pensions which came into effect late last year could have an effect on teacher demand this year, if more people decide to take early retirement."

Despite the difficulties of forecasting, the Ministry of Education follows the situation very closely. Says Mr. Crossley:

"Major research is commissioned every year at OISE into teacher need, and the statistics are as good as you can get in this business. We also do very detailed statistical studies in our own Ministry Planning and Research Branch."

"So we do get a good feeling on trends, but because we're always working on eventualities a year or two from now, and because new factors can come along to drastically influence the forecasts, there is no way to be precise about the specific number of new teacher graduates who will be needed each year."

"In Sweden, they have tried for over 100 years to accurately forecast the annual need for new teachers, and by their own admission they come about as close as we do in Ontario. It's about as close as you can come in a free society. Maybe in totalitarian countries they can assign quotas and assign people to fill those quotas, but we won't do that here."

"At OTEC, and I presume the same is true at the other teacher education facilities around the Province, we tell applicants as best we can about the anticipated job situation which may exist the following year."

"The important thing is that people enrolling in teacher education do so with their eyes open, in full knowledge that there is no guarantee of a teaching job in the community of their choice immediately upon graduation."

"I think that most people are aware of this, and accept it."

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